



ACTION FOR AGRICULTURE

REGISTERED NOT-FOR-PROFIT CHARITY

BANKSIA FOUNDATION 2024 NATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY AWARDS *MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS FOR IMPACT*



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EMPOWERING YOUTH FOR CHANGE

A COLLABORATIVE JOURNEY INSPIRED BY THE VINCENT FAIRFAX FAMILY FOUNDATION

The Young Environmental Champions program is a story of collaboration, empowerment, and change. It began with the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation (VFFF) recognising a crucial gap: young people felt that adults were not doing enough to tackle the world's complex problems. They were eager to make a difference but lacked the necessary support.

In response to this need, VFFF invited Action4Agriculture to design a unique program aimed at helping teachers support young people in taking action on issues that mattered to them. With generous seed funding from VFFF and further support from the Office for Regional Youth and Hunter Local Land Services, we embarked on a journey of collaborative synergy.

This journey wasn't just about funding. It was a fusion of resources, expertise, and local insights. We empowered teachers and, through them, motivated countless young minds to take charge. These students became leaders, initiating projects and advocating for change in their communities.

The culmination of our efforts was a celebration of success - a testament to what can be achieved when organisations and individuals come together with a common goal. This story is not just about a program; it's about igniting a legacy of change, driven by the unstoppable force of empowered youth.



01 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

WHO ARE THE MOST POWERFUL COMMUNICATORS OF SUSTAINABILITY MESSAGES?

Our young people.

HOW DO WE EMPOWER OUR YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE THE CHANGEMAKERS?

We support young people to investigate the world, recognise perspectives, communicate their ideas, take action and be 21st century global citizens.

BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

Action4Agriculture is a non-profit organisation that believes that while young people may be only 20% of our population, they are 100% of our future.

Our motivation is driven by the BIG QUESTION? What matters most for young people to understand about the world so they can participate fully in its future?

With pressing issues such as protecting the environment, managing unprecedented human migration, and addressing the challenges of poverty, global health, and human rights, our future depends on our ability to work together.

Action4Agriculture aims to create a national movement of young people who are solving tomorrow's problems today and who look to the future with confidence knowing they can change it, through the lens of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and our food and fibre industries.

"Hope is the necessary catalyst for action, and that activists (and would-be activists) must hold onto hope in order to create a world more like the one they want to live in, even in the face of enormous obstacles, especially, and necessarily, in the face of uncertainty."

- Rebecca Solnit *Hope in the Dark*.

In 2023 we launched and completed the pilot of the Young Environmental Champions (YEC) to empower young people to look at global problems and find local solutions. This program partners with the SDGs to support young people to investigate the world, recognise perspectives, communicate their ideas, and take action.

The YEC tasked our young people with creating a social or environmental impact project that would bring about positive change in their communities which they then pitched to a panel of judges. By equipping them with 21st century skills and giving them confidence to make their issues heard, the YEC is creating the employees every Banksia Award applicant will want.



The Empowering Young Environmental Champions program is supported by the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation who are Backing Young People with innovative opportunities that advance their independence, social purpose and future security and the Office for Regional Youth.

02

APPROACH AND IMPLEMENTATION



Josh Farr explaining the program and how it works
[\(click to watch\)](#)

based experts, including young role models from the agricultural sector, known as Young Farming Champions (YFC). This ensured the program was youth led, co-designed and actively incorporated the voices of young people from design to delivery as well as act as workshop co-hosts.

Drawing on our experience in the Hunter and Hawkesbury regions we launched and delivered the YEC to students in ten schools, with the aim of creating a student-led program that could be scaled and replicated.

Through in-person and on-line workshops we introduced the students to the SDGs, team building, program management, design thinking, stakeholder management, community action planning and how to effectively pitch their ideas. We gave them a leadership coach and mentors. We connected them with community projects, government agencies, volunteers and individuals who shared their visions and supported bringing their big ideas to fruition.

To complete the YEC journey students came together for a celebration event where they pitched their community action plans to a panel of judges and explained how the SDGs guided and informed their projects. You can view these extraordinary projects [here](#).

WHAT WE DID ...

For over a decade Action4Agriculture has been designing and delivering programs to support young people to make that vital connection between stewardship of the environment and agriculture. Our cornerstone in-school programs have been [The Archibull Prize](#) and [Kreative Koalas](#).

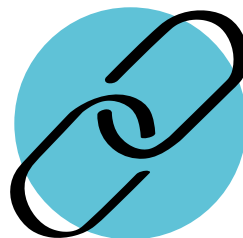
These successful and popular programs are initially teacher-led. In 2023 we wanted to give agency and voice to our young people and to let them take the lead. The Young Environmental Champions program was created for them with a broad range of regionally

THE PROGRAM FOCUSES ON THREE KEY PILLARS OF SUPPORT *NETWORKING-MENTORING-EMPOWERING*



NETWORK YOUNG PEOPLE WITH:

- Other young people in their region and other regions across NSW.
- Young people/role models who have successfully transitioned to higher education as mentors.
- Subject matter experts both within their community and outside their community.
- Other young people who have designed and delivered successful community projects.
- Mentors, allies, champions.



MENTOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO:

- Develop new skills and knowledge.
- Create and implement their OWN solutions, relevant to their local communities and/or educational institutions.
- Be changemakers and influencers.
- Develop social capital - the friendships, community contacts, mentors and networks that build a sense of belonging now and in the future.



EMPOWER YOUNG PEOPLE TO:

- Confidently design and implement action learning experiences that have a genuine impact, from start to finish.
- Build their networks.
- Have agency and voice.
- Develop succession plans and leave a legacy.

WHO WE WORKED WITH ...

To successfully launch and run the YEC we were grateful for funding from Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation and the NSW Government's Office for Regional Youth.

To implement the YEC we drew upon our experience and relationships developed through previous in-school programs and engaged a range of diverse stake-holders including:

- **Workshop facilitators** - Josh Farr from Campus Consultancy ran seven workshops for students while changeologist Les Robinson ran a workshop for teachers giving them valuable tools to support their students.
- **Centre of Excellence in Agricultural Education** - enabled four schools in the Hawkesbury region to participate in the program.

- **Young Mentors** - students from the University of Newcastle and early-career agricultural professionals from the Young Farming Champions network provided mentorship to participants.
- **Government** - Newcastle and Maitland Councils, NSW Government's Office for Regional Youth, Hunter Local Land Services and RDA (Regional Development Australia)
- **Environmental and Community Groups** - Hunter Landcare, Greater Sydney Landcare Network
- **Environmental Champions** - AAEE (Australian Association of Environmental Educators) chair Sue Martin, Newcastle environmental advocate Alexa Stuart, Youth Community Coordinator (ORY) Dan Brown, CoastXP founder Dominic May and founder of theBEATS.org Tommy Viljoen.

AND THEN OVERCOMING THE CHALLENGES ...

As the educational landscape grappled with the challenges brought on by the pandemic, teacher shortages, and shifting educational norms, including changes like the rescheduling of Naplan and updated protocols for school excursions, the Young Environmental Champions (YEC) program confronted significant hurdles in its delivery. Schools, initially eager to participate, found themselves withdrawing due to the prolonged absences of teachers.

The early part of 2023 marked a turning point. The government's decision to reschedule Naplan severely impacted schools' participation in Term 1, leading to further withdrawals. Additionally, we identified a mismatch between financial and calendar year funding, highlighting the necessity for projects to synchronize with calendar years to ensure smoother curriculum integration.

To effectively address these challenges, we conducted a comprehensive evaluation survey with teachers and students participating in the Young Environmental Champions (YEC) program at different stages. The findings of these surveys, detailed in our evaluation report available [here](#), pinpointed critical areas for improvement. One significant issue highlighted was the timing of the program and its limited capacity to support a larger cohort of students.

Teachers specifically expressed a strong preference for the program to expand its reach, allowing more students to participate. This expansion would enable a smoother integration of the YEC program into existing curricula and enhance its utility as an assessment tool. In response to these insights, we developed a detailed strategy, elaborated [here](#), to align the YEC program with the Australian Curriculum. As seen in our alignment map [here](#), this cross-curricular strategy is designed to enrich the learning experience, promoting a more comprehensive and holistic educational approach.

The strategy not only tackles the immediate concerns raised but also aligns with our broader objective of

improving educational effectiveness. This is achieved through fostering interdisciplinary learning and encouraging collaborative efforts among students and teachers.

In a further survey, teachers highlighted the need for emotional and professional support, accessible resources for project-based learning, and strategies to engage parents and the community. See survey evaluation report [here](#). To meet these needs, we developed two innovative online courses: '[Catalyst Coaches](#)' and '[From Idea to Impact](#).' These courses bridge educational gaps, providing equitable resource access and fostering an inclusive culture.

Students also suggested incorporating gamification into some workshops, aligning with contemporary educational trends that use interactive, game-based learning to boost engagement and motivation. This approach, further outlined [here](#), promises to make workshops more appealing and interactive, enhancing student participation and enjoyment.

The integration of the ["Futurescapes" app](#) into the YEC program also brings a fresh perspective, focusing on connecting school learning with real-world impact. This initiative adds substantial value by empowering young Australians to explore careers that resonate with their values, fostering responsibility and teamwork.

These collective insights steer the YEC program towards a dynamic evolution, addressing the educational needs and preferences of both teachers and students with innovative methods and supportive structures. Continuous adaptation ensures the YEC program remains relevant and effective in its mission to nurture young environmental champions.

Our progress has been bolstered by the adaptability of our funding partners, whose steadfast support in these transformative times has been invaluable.

FEEDBACK FROM IN-PERSON INDUCTION WORKSHOP

STUDENTS IDENTIFIED MEETING LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE AS A HIGHLIGHT OF THE PROGRAM.

"I liked how I was able to connect to various people and meet many professionals who have interests that I share with them."

- Student

"[Students] loved talking with the external stakeholders, and people from the council, finding out,... how they could... connect with them to solve problems."

- Student

"...the connection with the external stakeholders ... was surprisingly good... [students] appreciated engaging with other people who made it real for them..."

- Teacher

"...giving kids exposure to external people that actually do live and breathe this stuff is invaluable for them..."

- Teacher

03 RESULTS AND IMPACT



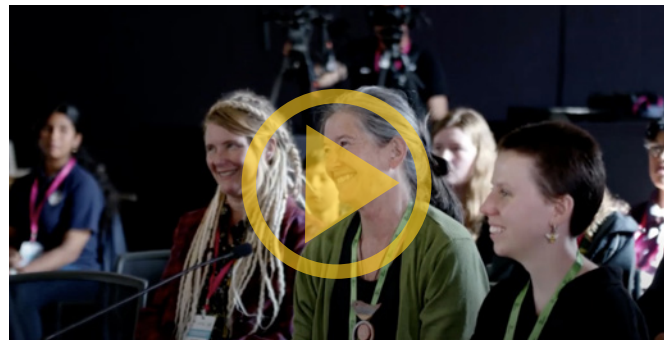
Champion Primary School - Hamilton Public School
(click to watch)



Reserve Champion Primary School - St Brigid's Primary School
(click to watch)



Champion Secondary School - St Joseph's College Lochinvar
(click to watch)



Reserve Champion Secondary School - Centre of Excellence in Agricultural Education
(click to watch)

As the [evaluation report](#) clearly shows, YEC graduates are global citizens building a sustainable and just world. See survey evaluation report [here](#).

YEC GRADUATES CAN



INVESTIGATE THE WORLD BEYOND THEIR IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT

Framing significant problems and conducting well-crafted and age-appropriate research.



REGONISE PERSPECTIVES, OTHERS' AND THEIR OWN

Articulating and explaining such perspectives thoughtfully and respectfully.



COMMUNICATE IDEAS EFFECTIVELY WITH DIVERSE AUDIENCES

Bridging geographic, linguistic, ideological, and cultural barriers.



TAKE ACTION TO IMPROVE CONDITIONS

Viewing themselves as active, reflective participants in the world.

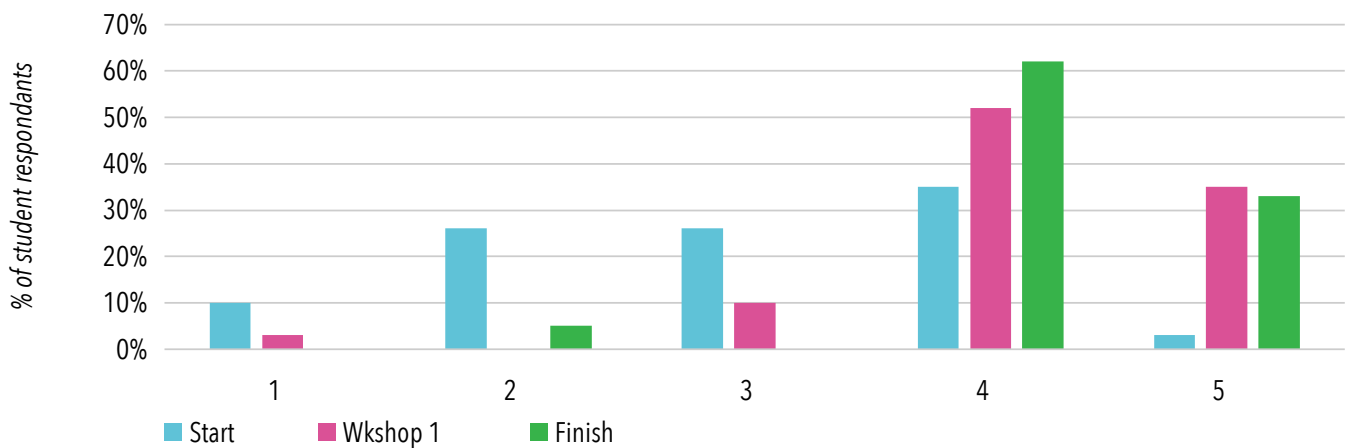
To assess the impact of our applied research program students and teachers were surveyed via entry and exit surveys, on-line workshop questionnaires and phone interviews and results were compiled in an evaluation report by Danielle Blenkhorn from Sustainable Schools. See [here](#).

The evaluation report concluded:

- The YEC is a dynamic leadership program that encouraged students to be agents of change.
- Students developed a deeper understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals
- Students appreciated opportunities to meet like-minded young people and professionals.
- The YEC provided opportunities to develop and enhance communication skills, working in and leading teams, problem solving and project planning.
- Students increased 21st century skills, including their levels of confidence in a range of areas that encourage resilience and wellbeing, being a good team member, problem solving and taking positive action.
- The hybrid delivery of in-person and online workshops provided flexible learning opportunities.

One of the driving aims of the YEC was to communicate the SDG to students. At the beginning of the program, most students rated their knowledge at a low level (62% rating 1,2 or 3). At the completion of the project, most students rated their knowledge of SDGs at a high level (95% rating 4 or 5).

STUDENTS' SELF-RATED KNOWLEDGE OF UN SDG



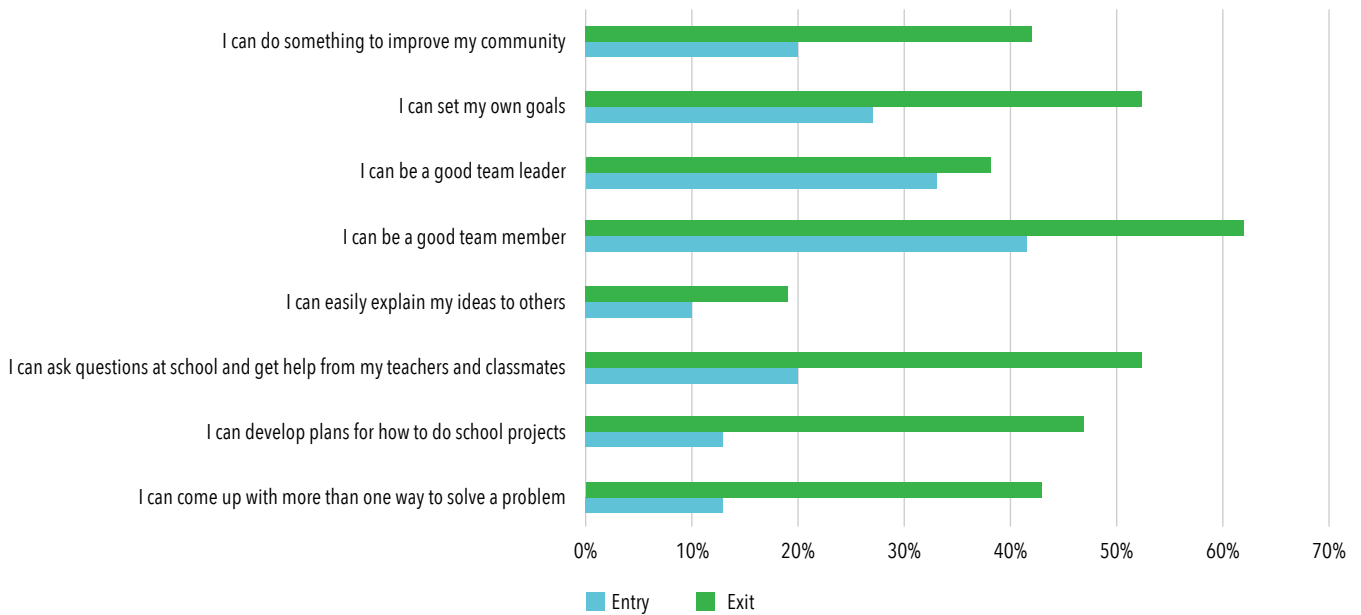
Knowledge rated on scale of 1 = Least to 5 = most

Students reported changing their thoughts or actions on sustainability because of taking part in the program. Ways students changed included:

- Increased knowledge, awareness and understanding of environmental issues.
- Improved communication and project-based learning skills.
- Empowered to take individual action to improve environmental sustainability.
- Empowered to encourage others to take individual and collective action to make positive change.

This was also reflected in the proportion of students reporting 'extremely high' levels of confidence across a range of issues that relate to resilience and wellbeing concepts.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS REPORTING 'EXTREMELY HIGH' LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE



The most notable increases in high levels of confidence were for the questions:

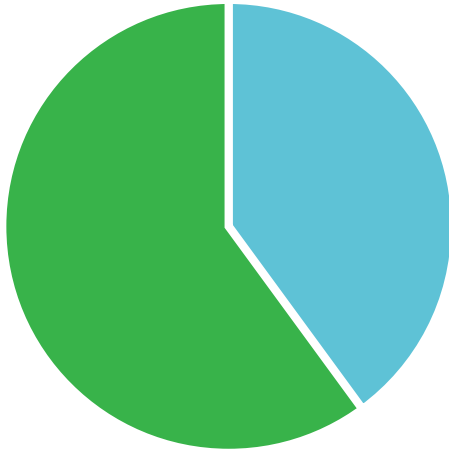
- I can ask questions at school and get help from my teacher, increase from 60% to 90% reporting high levels of confidence (50% increase)
- I can develop plans for how to do school projects, increase from 60% to 85% reporting high levels of confidence (42% increase)
- I can do something to improve my community, increase from 57% to 80% reporting high levels of confidence (40% increase)

Drilling down on this data further produced startling statistics such as the number of students identifying as confident "extremely confident" in developing plans for school projects. This figure increased from 13% at the beginning of the program to 48% at completion, representing an increase of 2.5 times.

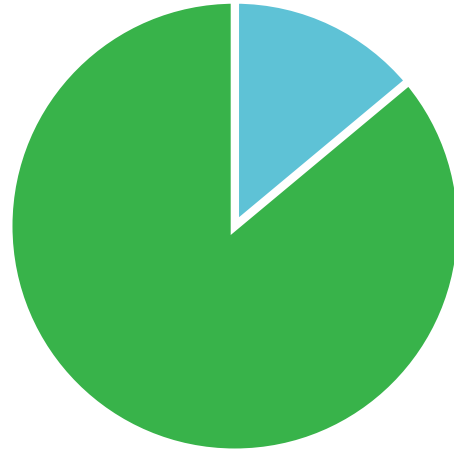
This is shown through this teacher's anecdote about a student's engagement and increased confidence as a result of the program.

"...[A parent] rang me that afternoon to...say that she was crying at just how much her daughter had blossomed going through the program. Because it had challenged her - she had to address our assembly, she had to run our environment meetings. She had to come to that Pitch event and talk to all the people. Aside from the sustainability side of it, the opportunities to allow our kids to be involved in programs like that is really valuable..."

I CAN DEVELOP PLANS FOR HOW TO DO SCHOOL PROJECTS
- STARTING PROGRAM

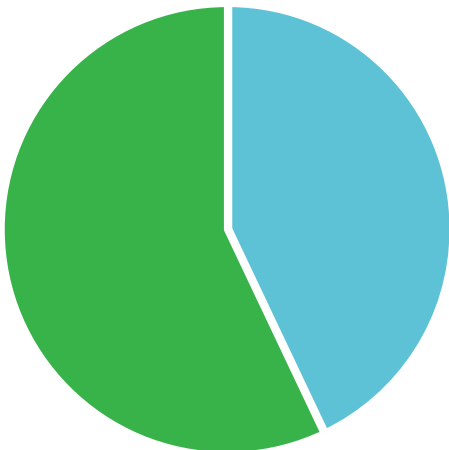


I CAN DEVELOP PLANS FOR HOW TO DO SCHOOL PROJECTS
- COMPLETING PROGRAM

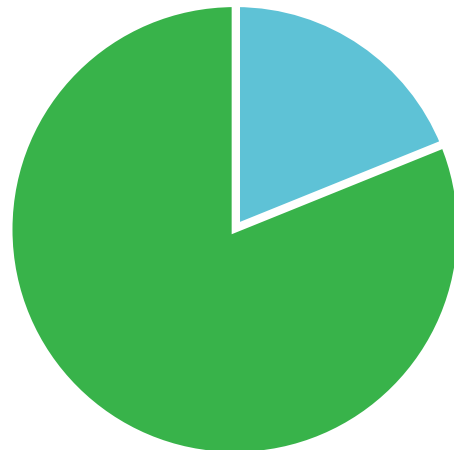


● Low confidence (not at all, slightly, somewhat) ● High confidence (Quite and extremely)

I CAN DO SOMETHING TO IMPROVE MY COMMUNITY
- STARTING PROGRAM



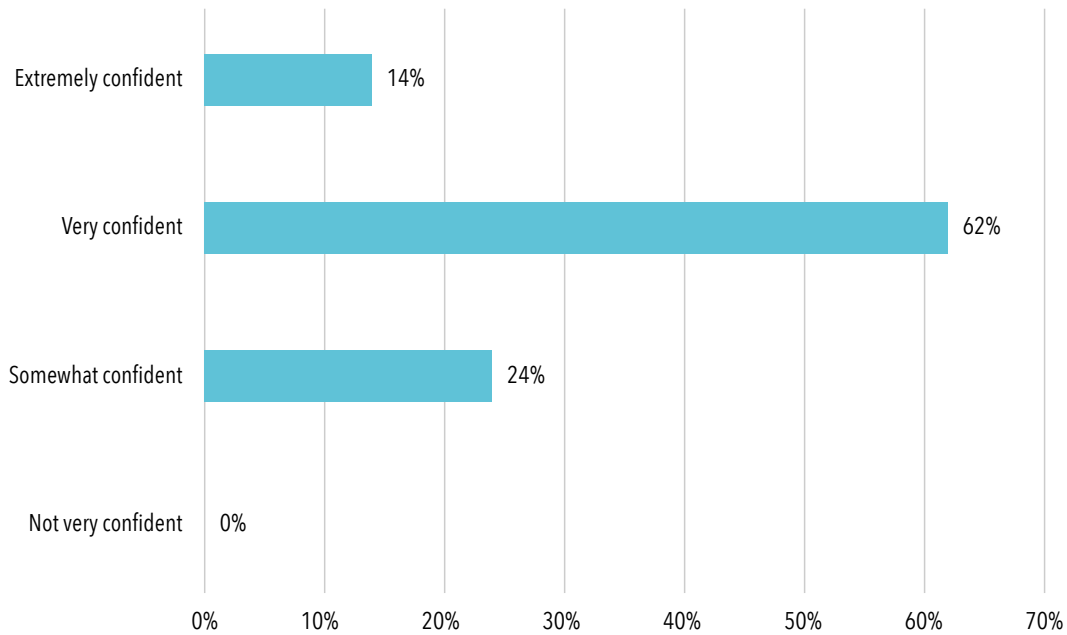
I CAN DO SOMETHING TO IMPROVE MY COMMUNITY
- COMPLETING PROGRAM



● Low confidence (not at all, slightly, somewhat) ● High confidence (Quite and extremely)

PERHAPS THE MOST TELLING STATISTIC IS THAT THE MAJORITY (76%) OF STUDENTS WERE EITHER 'VERY CONFIDENT' OR 'EXTREMELY CONFIDENT' THAT THEIR TEAM PROJECT COULD DRIVE THE CHANGE THEY WANTED TO SEE.

MY PROJECT CAN DRIVE CHANGE I WANT TO SEE



Data aside, feedback from students and teachers reflected the success of the YEC in communicating sustainability issues and giving agency and voice to our young people.

Student comments:

"[I have an] understanding that sustainability isn't just a yes or no but is rather a scale. This way, I have tried to go up further on the scale."

"You can't just tell people to change, you have to be the change."

Teacher comment:

"...The benefit of a project such as this is the authenticity of learning and development of real-world skills. It enables young people to engage in real world systems, to understand constraints and structures on real world problems and to engage with experts."

04 INNOVATION AND LEADERSHIP

Our programs are leading the way in design, delivery and celebration. We support young people to develop, grow and evolve. We teach them the skill of looking back and reflecting and being able to identify their growth as leaders.

We bring together members of government, teachers, parents and the community to celebrate them for their leadership and contributing to people, place and prosperity.

"We are often so busy that we don't take the time to celebrate our successes at the end of a project, we just hurriedly move on to the next thing. This is not the case with the Young Environmental Champions Program, which culminates in a show stopping awards ceremony attended by students, teachers, stakeholders and local dignitaries. The pride on the faces of the students when they see how valued they are for all their hard work gives me goosebumps. More importantly, it gives the students the confidence that they can continue to make a difference."

- Jane Lloyd-Jones School and Community Engagement Officer Hunter Local Land Services

"Vinnies supported Action4Agriculture initiatives over 18 months in the middle of the multiple lockdowns. Nonetheless, the programs continued and the disruptions didn't diminish the curiosity of students and their amazing ability to express learning creatively, culminating in an Awards and Celebration ceremony. This brought together all the schools and all of the incredibly colourful, expressive and thoughtful projects in a festival of hope and imagination. It was so inspiring to see a generation of future leaders wanting to learn more about some of their communities and the world's pressing issues like water management and climate change and want to be a part of the future solution. That is what the ceremony was all about and what it celebrated."

- John Fenech St Vincent's Bushfire Recovery Project Manager



Whereas other in-school programs are designed and delivered by teaching staff, the YEC showcases disruption by being completely student-led within a framework of the SDGs. Students come together to focus on issues that matter to them and are supported to explore these and find real-world solutions. Along the way they learn leadership and 21st century skills to enable them to confidently approach their future.

For the students this gives free rein to their imagination:

“I was able to open up ideas, I looked through the lens of my teammates, and by putting our brains together we have come up with an idea that may be difficult but possible to do.”

For teachers this was an innovative way to educate:

“It is always hard as a teacher, handing over control [but] that’s their opportunity to learn. This program allowed them ownership. They are so passionate; they come up with these ideas of how they want to change things and how they want to influence people. It so inspiring and you really get swept up in their ideas.”

In addition, YEC demonstrates disruption, innovation and leadership by:

- Encouraging students to think about global problems and act at a local level
- Empowering students to be confident communicators and collaborators and creative and critical thinkers.
- Preparing students for the green jobs of the future.
- Delivering on what teachers want – programs that engage students and show the real-world impact of their studies.
- Connecting young people with community leaders and mentors, showing them that the “adult-world” values their ideas and contributions.

Quantitative and qualitative interpretation of our survey data allows us to determine the success of the program and how it can be scaled and replicated. Danielle Blenkhorn, in the evaluation report, recommended:

“Regional uptake of the program can be supported by existing education networks and educators, such as education officers within Local Land Services, Education Pathways Program and Regional Industry Education Program.”

With this recommendation in mind we are thrilled to announce that Sustainable Schools NSW will take ownership of the YEC program going forward in order to deliver it into schools across the state in combination with our existing Kreative Koalas program. The strength of Kreative Koalas lies with the incorporation of arts into STEM with the painting of a fibreglass koala; the strength of the YEC is a student-led program where our young people can champion issues that are important to them.

The lasting legacy of this union will be a network of young people who can effectively communicate sustainability concepts and be the leaders of change in our future. In short, our X-factor and our legacy will be that we are creating:

THE EMPLOYEES EVERY BANKSIA AWARD APPLICANT WILL WANT.

BRIGHT IDEAS FROM TOMORROW'S LEADERS

**"LESS SOUND
POLLUTION"**

**"I'D LIKE
PEOPLE TO
GENERATE THEIR
OWN ENERGY, LIKE
RIDING A BIKE
CONNECTED TO
A DYNAMO."**

**"I WOULD LIKE TO
MAKE SURE THAT THE
WATER THAT WE GET FROM
FLOODS DOESN'T GO TO
WASTE. I WANT TO CREATE A WAY
WHERE THE WATER FROM THE
FLOODS FOLLOWS A ROUTE WHERE
IT REACHES A DAM AND CAN BE
USED FOR TRANSPORTING TO
OTHER COUNTRIES IN NEED
AS WELL AS FOR OUR
OWN USE."**

**"BEING A KIND AND
DECENT PERSON TO
THOSE HAVING TROUBLE
AROUND YOU AND
SUPPORTING THEM IN
ANYTHING THEY MAY
NEED HELP IN."**

**"FLYING TO
MARS AND
STARTING TO
TERRAFORM IT."**

**"YOU PUT
RUBBISH INTO A
MACHINE AND IT
TRANSFORMS INTO
ELECTRICITY."**

**"I WOULD
NOW LIKE TO
PUT MYSELF OUT
THERE AND LET
PEOPLE KNOW THAT
THEY AREN'T ALONE
WHEN IT COMES TO
PROBLEMS IN
SCHOOL."**

**"I WANT TO
LET THOSE IN NEW
ENVIRONMENTS KNOW
HOW THEY CAN FLOURISH
IN THEIR NEW AREA AND
THAT THEY CAN USE THEIR
ABILITY TO MAKE ACTIVE
DECISIONS TO NOURISH
THEMSELVES AS A
LEARNER."**

05

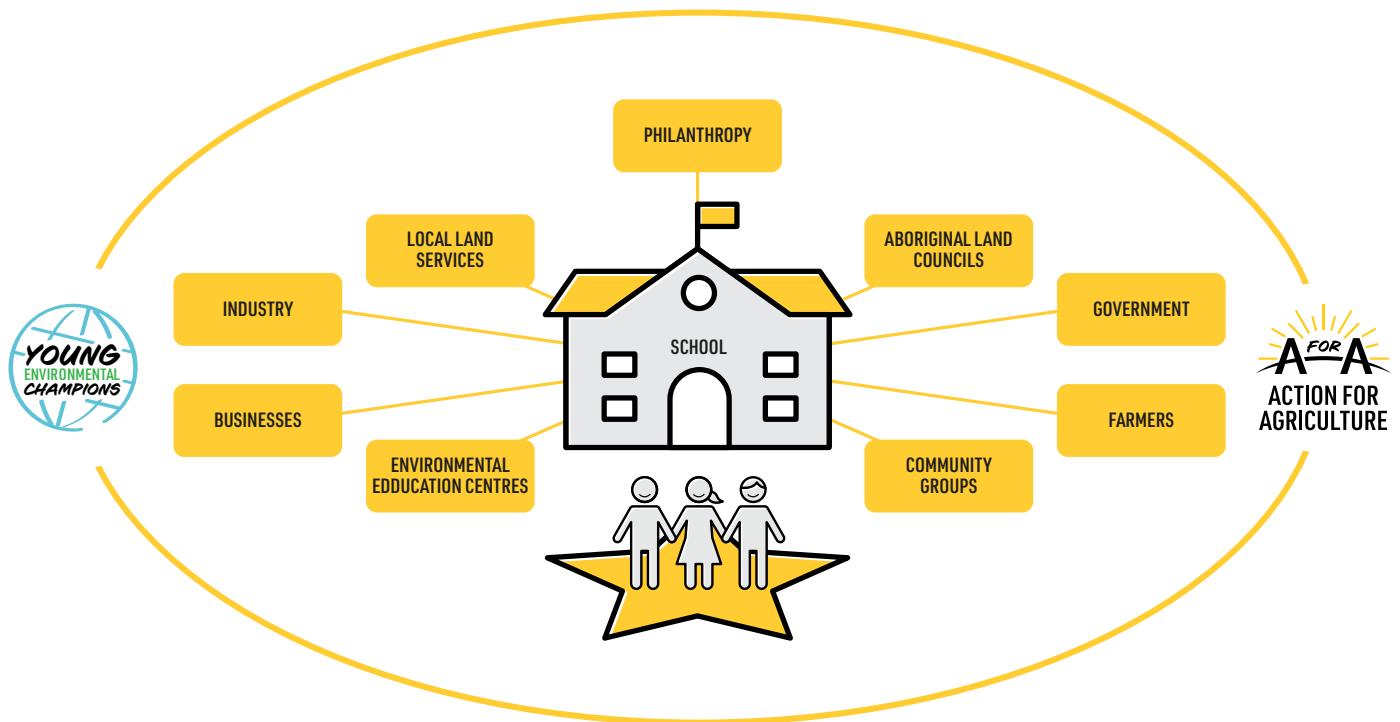
COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION

Our Marketing and Communications strategy, designed for both partners and schools, focuses on harnessing the power of social media to enhance visibility, create connections, and promote growth. This strategy serves two distinct purposes:

- For Partners:** It's crafted to establish strong relationships, ensuring mutual benefits and support. The approach emphasises communication of the program's objectives and achievements to foster a network of support and increased visibility.
- For Schools:** The strategy is tailored to integrate the program into educational settings, engaging both students and educators. It highlights the program's educational value, aligns with curricular goals, and focuses on the benefits it provides for student learning and personal development.

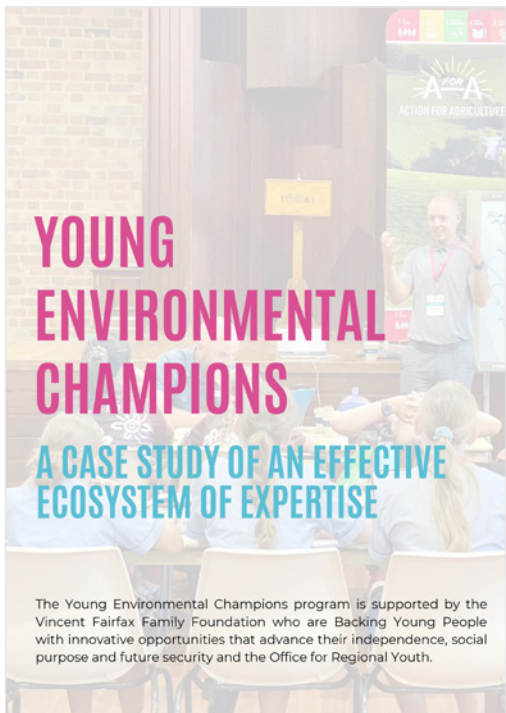
Through this comprehensive strategy, we aim to empower our partners and schools to effectively share stories, attract a community of like-minded individuals and organisations, and open new avenues for engagement and collaboration.

Our Collaboration Strategy, underpinning the Young Environmental Champions program, is structured around the Ecosystem of Expertise (EoE) model. This model positions young people at the centre, surrounded by a network of supportive stakeholders in a symbiotic relationship.



Engagement is crucial in EoE, and we employ diverse techniques to connect with partners, including events, local meetups, LinkedIn outreach, blog posts, Instagram YouTube videos, and personal connections. The program leverages platforms like Mighty Networks for community building and online courses, facilitating robust interactions among participants, mentors, and the Young Farming Champions. This approach not only supports our initiatives but also shares our learnings and experiences, guiding future generations towards a unified vision of empowered, knowledgeable youth.

Examples of how we do this is through the writing of e-Books that help others replicate and multiply their impact by learning from our experiences.



[DOWNLOAD HERE](#)



[DOWNLOAD HERE](#)

THEORY OF CHANGE

Empowerment is when young people feel hope, they have the ability and the power to take action. Empowerment happens when all aspects of the ecology (in the community) support young people to grow - focusing on their capacities and strengths - and provide opportunities for young people to serve and contribute in meaningful ways to their communities.

PROGRAM RESULTS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

Our key lessons have been shared with peers through our evaluation report, which has led to our ultimate success of sourcing an organisation with the capacity to replicate and scale the program. Sustainable Schools will deliver the program into schools across NSW from 2024. This ensures our young people will have the best chance to communicate their own sustainability messages and be the change they want to see in the world.

ONE SENTENCE SUMMARY

The Young Environmental Champions program partners with the Sustainable Development Goals to support young people to investigate the world, recognise perspectives, communicate their ideas, and take action.

150 WORD SUMMARY

The Young Environmental Champions program partners with the Sustainable Development Goals to support young people to investigate the world, recognise perspectives, communicate their ideas, and take action.

Delivered into primary and secondary schools, the YEC provides young people with the opportunity to identify a global problem and come up with a solution at a local level.

The program teaches our young people key 21st century skills, enabling them to become creative and critical thinkers, confident communicators and collaborators. This equips them for the jobs of today and tomorrow .

The program delivers on what teachers want: programs that engage their students and programs that show young people what they are learning at school has real-world impact.

The networks schools build through the Young Environmental Champions program illustrate to students that there are meaningful careers in this sector. The connection to community and business leaders shows young people that what matters to them is valued and respected by the "grown-up" world.

500 WORD SUMMARY

The challenge of preparing our youth for the future is greater than, preparing them for work. Pressing issues such as protecting the environment, managing unprecedented human migration, and addressing the challenges of poverty, global health, and human rights will demand a generation of individuals with a strong capacity to work together to solve global problems.

At Action4Agriculture we believe young people are the most powerful communicators of sustainability messages and these young people can then influence friends, family, and community.

We empower students in primary and secondary schools to be these communicators through the Young Environmental Champions program, which introduces them to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and tasks them with creating an action plan on an issue that is important to them.

Over a 10-week period the pilot of Young Environmental Champions took students from ten schools in the Hunter and Hawkesbury regions on an action learning sustainability journey.

They were supported by a broad range of regionally based experts, including young role models from the agricultural sector, known as Young Farming Champions (YFC). This ensured the program was youth led, co-designed and actively incorporated the voices of young people from design to delivery as well as act as workshop co-hosts.

Students attended in-person and online workshops, learning about the SDGs, team building, project management, design and systems thinking and community action planning. We gave them a leadership coach and mentors. We connected them with community projects, government agencies, volunteers and individuals who shared their visions and supported bringing their big ideas to fruition.

To complete the YEC journey students came together for a celebration event where they pitched their community action plans to a panel of judges and explained how the SDGs guided and informed their projects.

We were amazed at the results. Students found a diversity of projects to focus on including sustainable fishing, waste management and recycling, increasing pollinators, improving student mental health, technology to transition students to high school, community partnerships and climate action.

At Hamilton Public School students focused on SDGs 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing) and 13 (Climate Action) to create a project titled People Power. *"[We are] aspiring to improve the health of individuals and our community. We aim to clean the air and promote physical health by promoting modes of transport that are strictly people powered!"* Hamilton Public School was the worthy winner of the YEC primary section.

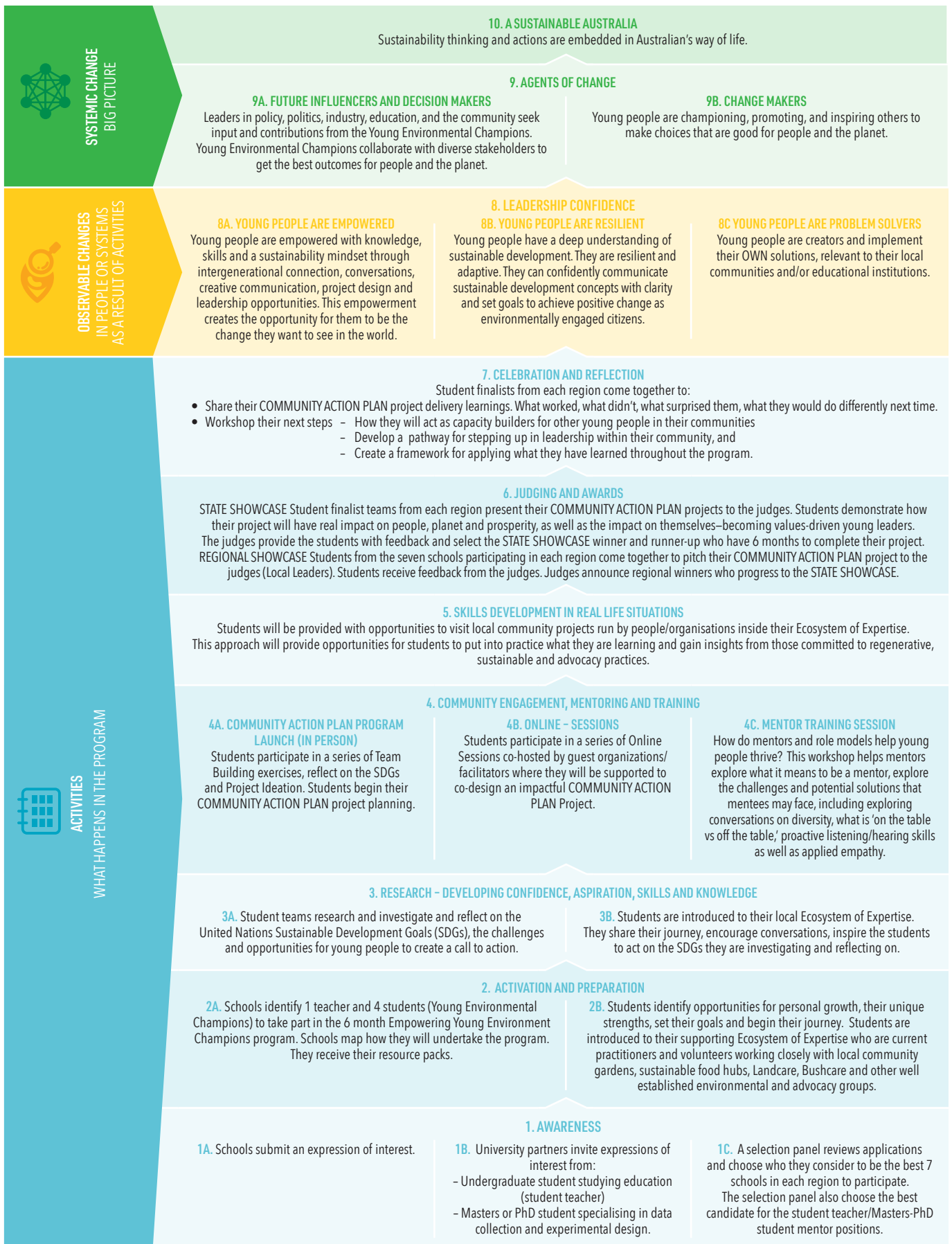
Winning the secondary section were students from St Joseph's Lochinvar who looked at flood mitigation due to local urbanisation and how it would affect their school, coming up with a solution that utilised the excess water through irrigation. Their project incorporated SDGs 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) and 15 (Life on Land) and was an excellent example of how global issues can be addressed at a local level.

Through YEC our young people are reshaping, rewiring and reimagining the future. They are learning 21st century skills to become creative and critical thinkers, confident communicators, and collaborators. They are becoming tomorrow's leaders today and they will be the employees every applicant for a Banksia Award applicant will want on their team.

The YEC has proven so successful it will be replicated and scaled in 2024 creating a new generation of global citizens who can investigate the world beyond their immediate environment, recognise different perspectives, others' and their own, communicate ideas effectively with diverse audiences, and take action to improve conditions.



YOUNG ENVIRONMENTAL CHAMPIONS HIERARCHY OF INTENDED OUTCOMES



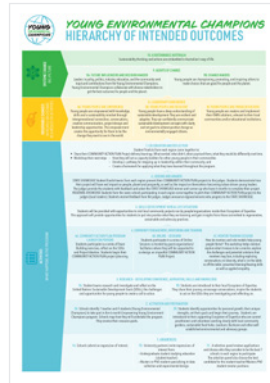
APPENDIX

GROUP PROJECTS AND RELATED UN SDG

Project Name	Description	SDG
Tree & Beyond	The project focuses on creating a green campus in our school by planting trees and installing water saving devices.	SDG 15 Life on Land
People Power	Aiming to improve the health of individuals and promote healthy communities through physical activity.	SDG 3 Good Health and Well-being, SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities
Sustainable Farming	Students have been researching and learning about sustainable farming and its importance to our world.	SDG 14 Life Below Water
Responsible East Point School Board Member	Educating our school community about waste management and recycling.	SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production
Addressing the Role of Technology in Education	Investigation of various online tools available to teachers to improve their teaching. The students will also explore the role of technology in education and its impact on the future of learning.	SDG 4 Quality Education
Project of Choice	Committing to SDG 16 - making responsible decisions. This involves taking the responsibility of our actions and being able to make the right choice in a given situation.	SDG 4 Quality Education, SDG 16 Peace and Justice, Strong Institutions
Business and Finance	Strengthening the foundation of our school's financial literacy program through the use of real-world examples and hands-on learning experiences.	SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities, SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth
Healthy Mind, Healthy Learning	An initiative to promote the well-being of our students and staff by providing mental health resources and support. This includes creating a safe and supportive environment for students and staff to seek help when needed.	SDG 3 Good Health and Well-being
ACTHON 2023	The week-long challenge week and online competition to help engage students in climate change action.	SDG 13 Climate Action

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